

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-20 (cancelled).

21. (currently amended) A firearm barrel comprising:
a rigid elongate tubular sleeve including a ~~bore~~, bore;
a breech portion at a first end of the ~~sleeve~~, and sleeve;
a muzzle portion at a second end of the sleeve opposite the first end;
an elongate thin-walled insert member supported in the bore of the sleeve; and
a casing that tightly connects the breech portion to the muzzle portion.

22. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21 in which the casing is molded over at least a portion of the sleeve.

23. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 22 in which the casing is molded of a moldable material selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a polymer;
- (b) a copolymer;
- (c) a blend of a polymer and carbon fibers; and
- (d) a glass reinforced polymeric material.

24. (currently amended) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21 in which the insert member is connected to the sleeve.

25. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 24, further comprising an adhesive material that bonds the insert member to the sleeve.

26. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 24, in which the insert member is press fit into the sleeve.

27. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21, in which the muzzle portion includes a stem having serrations.

28 (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 27 in which the casing is molded into engagement with the serrations of the stem to prevent relative longitudinal movement between the muzzle portion and the casing.

29. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21, in which the breech portion includes a stem having serrations.

30 (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 29 in which the casing is molded into engagement with the serrations of the stem to prevent relative longitudinal movement between the breech portion and the casing.

31. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 29, in which the stem defines an interior bore sized to receive an end of the sleeve and the sleeve is inserted into the bore, thereby eliminating a shear point between the breech portion and the sleeve.

32. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21, in which the breech portion and the sleeve partially overlap along the length of the insert, to thereby eliminate a shear point between the breech portion and the sleeve.

33. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21, in which the sleeve is formed of steel or aluminum.

34. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 21 in which the casing is molded of a material that shrinks when molded to thereby generate a tension that pulls the breech portion and the muzzle portion toward each other.

35. (original) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 34 in which the tension is opposed by a compression force exerted on the sleeve.

36. (previously presented) A firearm barrel comprising:
a breech portion having a minor bore;
an elongate thin-walled insert member supported in the minor bore of the breech portion;

a rigid elongate tubular sleeve surrounding the insert member along at least a majority of the length of the insert member, the sleeve longitudinally overlapping with at least a part of the breech portion to thereby increase a shear strength of the barrel; and
a casing positioned around at least a portion of the sleeve.

37. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36 in which:
the breech portion includes a major bore coaxial with the minor bore and sized to fit the sleeve; and
the sleeve is inserted into the major bore.

38. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 37 in which the sleeve is press fit into the major bore of the breech portion.

39. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36 in which the sleeve is adhered to the breech portion.

40. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36 in which the insert member is connected to the sleeve or the breech portion, or both.

41. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36 in which the casing is tightly connected to the breech portion.

42. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36, further comprising a muzzle portion.

43. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 42 in which the muzzle portion includes a minor bore and a major bore, the insert member inserted into the minor bore and the sleeve inserted into the major bore.

44. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36, further comprising a muzzle portion including a minor bore into which the insert member is inserted, the casing tightly connecting the muzzle portion to the breech portion.

45. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 44, in which:

the muzzle portion includes a first set of serrations;
the breech portion includes a second set of serrations; and
the casing engages the first and second sets of serrations.

46. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 44 in which the casing is molded of a polymeric material that shrinks when molded to thereby generate a tension that pulls the breech portion and the muzzle portion toward each other.

47. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 46 in which the tension is opposed by a compression force exerted on the sleeve.

48. (previously presented) A firearm barrel in accordance with claim 36 in which the casing is formed of a light weight material selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a polymer;
- (b) a copolymer;
- (c) a blend of polymer and carbon fibers;
- (d) a glass reinforced polymeric material; and
- (e) a fiberglass wrap.